

February 02, 2015

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

A Legislative Committee meeting was held on Monday, February 02, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the County Administration Building, Quorum Court Meeting Room, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas

Committee Members Present: K. Harrison, Easley, Chiocco, J. Harrison, Sandlin, Meyers, Anglin

Others Present: JPs Shadlow, Allen

JP K. Harrison called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comments

None

Committee Chair Kevin Harrison asked that the committee nominate a vice chairman to hold a Legislative Committee meeting if he was unable to attend a meeting.

JP Chiocco made motion to nominate JP Susan Anglin as vice-chairman of the Legislative Committee, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by show of hands vote.

Arkansas Association of Counties 2015 Proposed Legislative Package

Lengthy discussion was held on the Association of Arkansas Counties 2015 Proposed Legislative Package to the 99th General Assembly.

a. Proposed Amendment to Arkansas Code 14-14-1210 to include justices of the peace in the 3 percent per annum to the minimum and maximum per diems.

Lengthy discussion was held on the proposed bill that addresses a COLA adjustment to the tiers of reimbursement allowed for justices of the peace per diem levels.

JP Meyers made motion to forward for discussion to the Finance Committees for consideration that justices of the peace be included in the same COLA increase as all other elected officials, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Some further discussion was held on the proposed amendment to Arkansas Code 14-14-1210.

Motion passed by show hands vote.

b. Amend Ordinance O-1984-12 Authorizing the County Sheriff to Appoint Deputies who live Outside Benton County.

JP K. Harrison stated that the Sheriff has requested that Ordinance O-1984-12 be revised to allow them to appoint full or part-time deputies outside Benton County.

After lengthy discussion committee members expressed that they would like County Attorney George Spence to review the current ordinance before taking any action.

No action was taken. JP J. Harrison made motion to table the discussion until they heard from the County Attorney and the County Sheriff, seconded by JP Meyers.

Motion to table passed.

c. Amend Ordinance O-2009-42 Increasing the Daily Fee Charged to Municipalities Housing Prisoners in the County Jail.

Committee Chair JP K. Harrison stated that the committee needs to consider a county ordinance increasing the fee charge to cities for holding prisoners in the county jail from \$40 per day to \$45. He stated that the county should also set the fee for the state at the same rate. Harrison stated that the jail belongs to the citizens of Benton County not the State of Arkansas.

JP Meyers questioned the county's authority to simply set the level of payment and require the state to pay or remove state inmates from the jail.

JP Allen stated that he was not aware that it is a state law, that \$28 is just what they pay us. He said that the only law it would be in is the state budget. He stated if it were a state statute the county cannot just change it.

JP K. Harrison reiterated that the jail belongs to the citizens of Benton County not the State of Arkansas. He added that any law is legal until it is challenged.

Lengthy discussion was held on increasing the fee charged to the cities and the state for holding prisoners in the county jail.

JP Anglin stated that she did not want to pursue raising the fees for cities while the state reimbursement level remains so much lower. She stated that she did not think that we are in a position to take on the state; they are going to give us what they are going to give us.

JP Easley stated that he would like to know all of the facts first, before making a decision.

No action was taken.

d. Sheriff's Office - Firearm Disposal

JP Meyers stated that he wants the committee to consider a proposal that he raised last year that directs the Sheriff's Office to dispose of some firearms that are now being destroyed by selling them at public auction. He stated that some of the weapons that are being destroyed could bring in thousands of dollars at auction and that we are throwing away a lot of money.

After further discussion, the committee agreed to forward the firearm disposal issue to the Thursday, March 12, 2015 Legislative agenda.

JP K. Harrison stated that he would have someone from the Sheriff's Office attend the next meeting,

e) Other Business

JP Meyers expressed his concerns of losing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in the unincorporated areas currently provided by Springdale. He stated that he was concerned for the liability to the county.

JP Allen stated that he has been working with the County Attorney, County Judge and the Administrator of Public Safety Marshal Watson and making inquiries to see what they can do.

JP K. Harrison announced that a Legislative Committee meeting will be held Thursday, March 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.